



NOTICE – THIS IS A DIFFERENT ASSIGNMENT THAN THE ONE LOADED IN THE EPIC COURSEWARE.

DO NOT USE THE ASSIGNMENT IN EPIC. USE THIS ALTERNATE ASSIGNMENT FOR ED TECH STUDENTS.

Week 5: Reflection

Reflection

Throughout this course we have discussed a number of legal issues facing today's public-school educators. For your final assignment, you will select three legal issues that you feel will be most relevant to you as a school technology leader. One of these issues will focus on student management; a second on personnel management. The third can relate to any topic we've covered in the course. By giving your responses to the questions that follow, you will 1) record what you have learned in this course, 2) reflect on its significance in your professional life, and 3) develop a plan to further increase your knowledge and skills.

Follow These Steps

1. Reflect upon what you have learned about law and public education.
2. Use the guiding questions in each section to stimulate your thinking as you write **three 150-word essays**. The questions are meant to guide you, but you may not necessarily provide specific answers to all of them.
3. Write reflectively instead of in "question and answer" style, and feel free to add any related thoughts that go beyond the scope of the writing guidelines.
4. Use formal writing style and cite Essential Readings and court decisions that support your ideas. You should use APA style.
5. Submit your three completed essays by the end of Week 5.

Rubric

Use this rubric to guide your work.

Week 5: Reflection	Accomplished	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
Reflection	Completes all 3 essays of the reflection assignment using the minimum 150-words requirement (8 points)	Completes 2 essays of the reflection assignment (5 points)	Completes 1 essay of the reflection assignment (3 points)	Did not submit reflection assignment (0 points)
Mechanics	No mechanical writing errors (2 points)	One to four mechanical writing errors (1 point)		More than five mechanical writing errors (0 points)

Essay 1: Student Management and Technology

Respond to the questions in the red box. Your essay should:

- Use citations from the research when applicable.
- Use professional writing protocols.
- Use professional language.

- Which of the student-management issues as they relate to the topic of Cyber Law discussed in this course and in your Cyber Law text is most relevant to you as a school technology leader?
- How have your views changed about the proper policies and procedures to employ regarding student management?
- How will the knowledge gained on this topic help you become an effective school technology leader?
- How will it help your staff and your students?

Type your essay in the space below.

Student Internet usage is a difficult arena. It can be hard to understand what is seen as inappropriate versus what is covered under Free Speech. Claims including libel, slander, harassment, invasion of privacy, and negligence are not covered under Free Speech. It is important to note that offensive speech posted on the internet can have litigation since it has a likelihood of "reaching more people than non electronic speech and thus can cause significantly great harm (Bissonette 2009)." But, our First Amendment right allows students to "to comment on and criticize their teachers, their schools, fellow students, and other members of the school community (Bissonette 2009)." Tinker v Des Moines Independent Community School district states that as long as students are orderly and do not interfere with others rights to be free from harassment then they are covered under their 1st Amendment rights. Bethel School District 403 v Fraser informs us that if speech undercuts the schools basic educational mission, speech can be prohibited. Schools have a role in teaching students "appropriate form of civil discourse" which I believe also means we as technology leaders need to teach students appropriate form of discourse digitally. (Bissonette 2009)

Where student Internet use is concerned it is important that we understand that since "schools provide, maintain, and pay for school Internet systems, they generally may limit students use of such systems." Due to these precedents being set, a limited forum is declared which "restrict(s) obscene, profane, rude, and discriminatory speech, criminal or dangerous speech, speech that could cause damage or that presents a danger for the school or members of the school community, and speech that abuses or clogs the school Internet system (Bissonette 2009)."

It is important that, as a school leader, I help to set up an Internet education curriculum. Our students need to know how to correctly utilize their free speech rights within the confines of school and how it can be affected off campus. Educating our students is not only the appropriate thing to do but will also help potential liability.

Bissonette, A. (2009). *Cyber Law: Maximizing safety and minimizing risk in classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Essay 2: Personnel Management

Respond to the questions in the red box. Your essay should:

- Use citations from the research when applicable.
 - Use professional writing protocols.
 - Use professional language.
- What have you learned about teacher evaluation and remediation that you did not know before taking this class?
 - How will the information presented in this course help you become a better leader with school employees?
 - What aspect of school personnel management do you feel you need to learn more about?
 - How do you plan to gain this knowledge?

Type your essay in the space below.

As an educator I have never been on the principal's side of the evaluation. During my readings I came across some valuable information concerning evaluations and contracts. One piece of information I came across was in an article written by Kersten and Israel which stated that teacher evaluations are correlated with Sputnik to put pressure on schools to increase student achievement. They also stated that "principals believe that the current teacher evaluation systems are inordinately time intensive and preclude many other opportunities of school building leaders to work with faculty to improve classroom instruction (2005)."

As a school leader, teacher contracts and the different ways of being renewed or non-renewed is important to understand. The Texas Education Code Section 21.002 details the 3 types of contracts which are the probationary, continuing contract, and the term contract. The term contract being the strongest contract in which a teacher has more rights as far as termination of contract is concerned. Texas Education Code 21.102 details the probationary contract. These are teachers who are employed by a school district for the first time. Were previously a teacher returns to a district with at least a 2 year laps in employment under probationary contract. May not exceed one school year but can be renewed for two additional one year periods. It may not exceed teacher's third consecutive year in a district. 21.103 describes how a probationary contract can be terminated. The teacher may be terminated after contract is completed and board must give 45 days notice. 21.104 states that the probationary teacher may be dismissed if good cause is determined by board.

Under 21.204 the term contract is discussed. In a term contract a teacher does not have a property interest in a contract beyond its term. Under section 21.205 a term contract may not exceed five school years. Under section 21.206 a teacher with a term contract must be given notice of contract renewal or nonrenewal no later than 45 days before last day of instruction. If contract renewal or non renewal is not given within allotted time, then a hearing happens under term contract for due process. 21.211 Termination may occur at any time during a term contract if good cause is determined by board or if a financial exigency that requires a reduction in personnel.

While discussing all the administrative functions with my campus principal, I realize that the communication skills needed to work with teachers is extremely beneficial for me as a technology leader. I plan to take administrative courses on working as a leader to better communicate with the teachers at my school and those I may have contact with in the future.

Kersten, T. A., & Israel, M. S. (2005). Teacher evaluation: Principal's insights and suggestions for improvement. *Planning and Changing*, 36(1&2), 47-67.

Texas education code. Retrieved November 6, 2010, from
<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.21.htm>

Essay 3: Improving Professional Practice

Respond to the questions in the red box. Your essay should:

Use citations from the research when applicable.

Use professional writing protocols.

Use professional language.

- Select another legal topic covered in the Cyber Law textbook that you feel affects you as a school technology leader.
- What have you learned about this topic, and how will this new knowledge affect your decision-making as a technology leader?
- What professional development opportunities can you spearhead in your school to inform teachers about this issue?

Type your essay in the space below.

Bullying has been around for as long as human kind can remember. Cyberbullying, though, is relatively new and few precedence setting litigations are in place to help as a guide for educators. Cyberbullying relies on electronic devices, the internet, and the anonymity the Internet provides (Bissonette 2009). Netsmarz simply defines Cyberbullying as the use of the Internet to harass or bully others (2010). Victims can be harmed in many ways such as flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, and trickery (Bissonette 2009).

As a technology administrator, Cyberbullying is a concern. In Highland Park we have had a few incidents cyberbullying. One incidence dealt with fourth grade girls using Moodle chat to harass another girl after school hours. Due to the students using software through the district server, we took action quickly. Not only did the girls receive disciplinary actions but the chat feature was removed for our Moodle server. Prior to this incidence, most teachers and parents were not informed on the issue. We have begun regular trainings for teachers and students concerning internet safety which includes cyberbullying. We have recently started having parent education also to help keep our students safe not only at school but at home as well.

In the incidence of the fourth grade girls, our district took actions to not only keep the student safe but to ensure the same problem did not occur. The district took quick, concise actions to alleviate any offenses which could be litigated.

Along with education, policies are also an important part of keeping our students safe from cyberbullying. If students realize that consequences for such actions are in place, they then realize the severity of the problem.

Bissonette, A. (2009). *Cyber Law: Maximizing safety and minimizing risk in classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. (2010). *Netsmarz workshop*. Retrieved from (<http://www.netsmartz.org/resources/reallife.htm>)